

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on February 11, 2003. Claims 1 - 18 are currently pending in the application. Applicant cancels claims 1, 4 and 7 without prejudice or disclaimer, amends claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 - 10, 12, 14, and 16 - 18, and adds new claim 19. No new matter is introduced.

OBJECTION TO CLAIMS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 - 15 are objected to as being dependent on rejected base claims 1, 4 and 7, but that each would be allowable if rewritten to include all the limitations of its associated base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant amends claims 2 and 10 to essentially include the limitations of base claim 1, amends claims 5, 6 and 12 to essentially include the limitations of base claim 4, and amends claims 8 and 14 to essentially include the limitations of base claim 7. As a result, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 are allowable.

In addition, Applicant amends claim 3 to depend from amended claim 2, and amends claim 9 to depend from amended claim 8. Claim 11 depends from amended claim 10, claim 13 depends from amended claim 12, and claim 15 depends from amended claim 14. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 9, 11, 13 and 15 are also allowable, and requests that the objection be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4, 7 and 16 - 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,344,791 to Armstrong in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,943,044 to Martinelli et al. Applicant cancels claims 1, 4 and 7 without prejudice or disclaimer, amends claim 16 to depend from allowable claim 2, amends claim 17 to depend from allowable claim 5, and amends

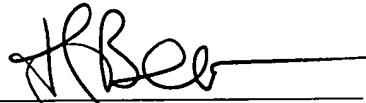
claim 18 to depend from allowable claim 8. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 16 – 18 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 2, 2, 5, 6 and 8 - 19, consisting of independent claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 19, and the claims dependent therefrom, is in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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